

6203.0 - Labour Force, Australia, Jun 1999

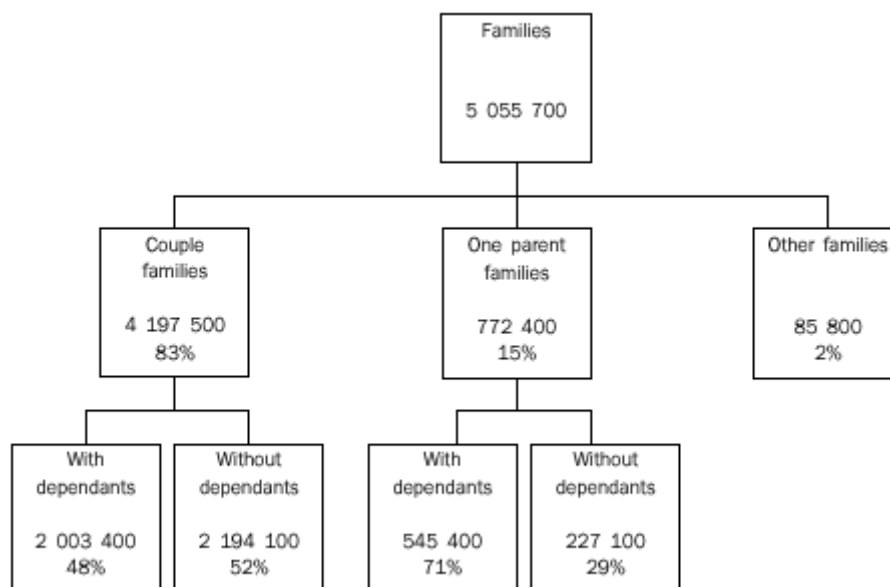
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PREFACE

This article provides a brief overview of the labour force characteristics of Australian families. It is based on data collected in the June 1999 Labour Force Survey, and released in the annual publication Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Families, Australia (Cat. no. 6224.0). The data for June 1999 presented in this article cover 14,176,000 people or 95% of the civilian population aged 15 and over. Of these people, 11,679,400 (82%) were members of 5,055,700 families. Of the remaining 2,496,600 people, i.e. those who were not members of a family, 64% lived alone.

AUSTRALIAN FAMILIES

As shown in the diagram below, the large majority of Australian families were couple families, slightly less than half of which had dependants. One parent families were the next largest group, with more than two thirds having dependants. Of the 772,400 one parent families, 86% had a female parent. In 59% of one parent families with dependants the youngest child was aged 0-9 years.

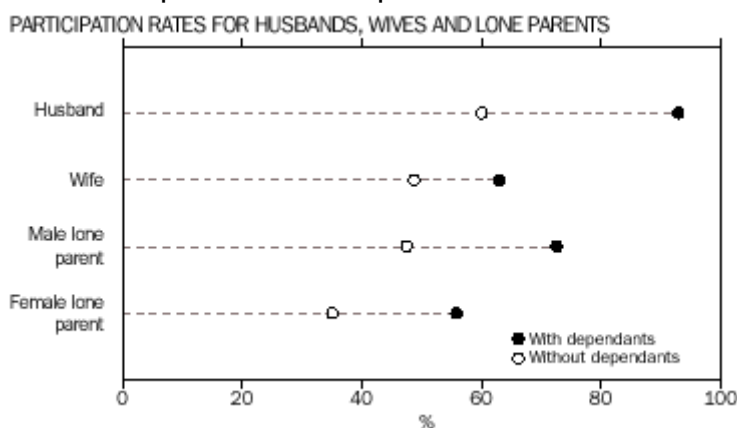


LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

In June 1999, there were 7,616,800 (65%) family members in the labour force. Of these, 7,131,100 (94%) were employed and 485,800 (6.4%) were unemployed. A further 4,062,600 members of families were not in the labour force, and of these, 1,996,00 (49%) were aged 55 and over.

Some 3,223,100 (76%) husbands were in the labour force, compared with 2,301,600 (55%) wives. Husbands with dependants participated in the labour force in 93% of cases, and 4.5% of these husbands were unemployed. In comparison, 63% of wives with dependants were in the labour force, with 4.8% unemployed. More than half (57%) of employed wives with dependants worked part time, compared with only 6% of employed husbands with dependants.

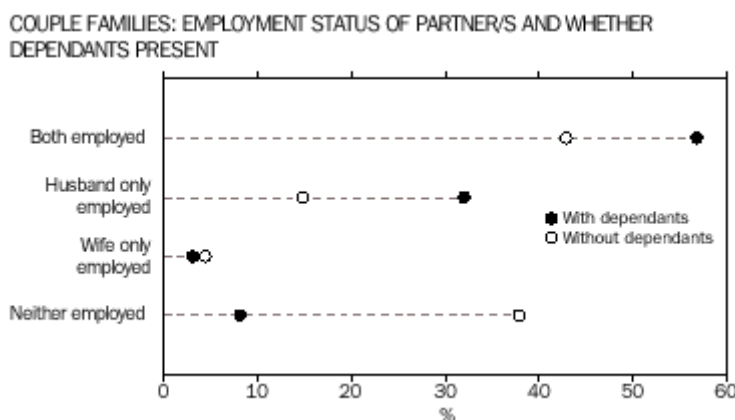
Of the 60,200 male lone parents with dependants, 72% (43,700) were in the labour force, and of these, 12.6% were unemployed. This compared with 484,700 female lone parents with dependants of whom 56% (269,900) were in the labour force, with 15.7% (42,500) unemployed. More than half (52%) of employed female lone parents with dependants worked part time, compared with 17% of male lone parents with dependants.



COUPLE FAMILIES

In June 1999, couple families accounted for 83% of Australian families. The proportion of couple families with at least one partner employed has decreased from 82% in 1980 to 76% in 1999. Over the same period, the proportion of couple families with both partners employed has risen from 40% to 50%.

The proportion of couple families with neither partner employed has also increased gradually, moving from 18% in 1980 to 23% in 1999. This change has coincided with an increase in the proportion of couples where both partners are aged 45 and over, and both are not in the labour force.



COUPLE FAMILIES WITH DEPENDANTS

In June 1999, 92% of couple families with dependants had one or both partners employed. This proportion has increased from 89% in June 1989, with most of the change happening in the mid

1990s.

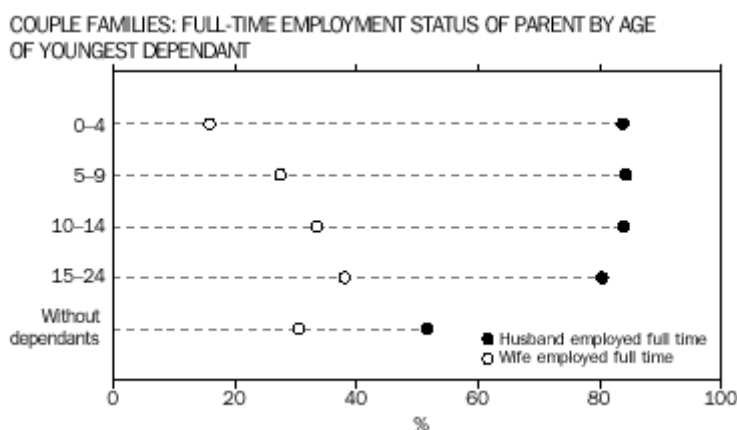
The husband was employed in 89% of all couple families with dependants. This proportion has been steady in recent years. In 94% of these cases, the husband was employed full time.

The wife was employed in 60% of couple families with dependants. The proportion where the wife was employed full time has risen from 20% in the early 1980s to 26% in 1999. The percentage of wives employed part time has been relatively steady at around 34% in recent years, after rising slowly from around 25% in the early 1980s.

In couple families with dependants, the extent of full-time employment for wives increases with the age of the youngest dependant. By contrast, for husbands with dependants, participation in full-time employment is unaffected until the dependant is older, when participation begins to decrease.

In 8.1% or 162,500 couple families with dependants, both the husband and wife were either unemployed or not in the labour force. This has decreased from 8.6% in June 1998. The proportion of couple families with dependants having one or both parents unemployed has declined steadily from 10.7% in June 1993 to 6.5% in June 1999. Over time, the unemployment pattern for these families generally reflects changes in the level of unemployment for the total population.

In June 1999 there were 269,800 children aged 0-14 who lived in couple families where neither parent was employed.

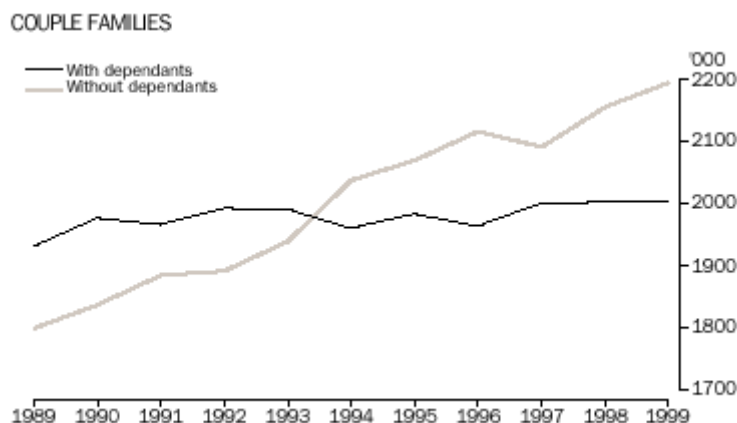


COUPLE FAMILIES WITHOUT DEPENDANTS

In June 1999, couple families without dependants represented 52% of all couple families. Since June 1994, the percentage of couple families without dependants has exceeded those with dependants.

In 73% of couples without dependants, the husband and wife were both aged 45 and over, up from 71% in June 1990. Of these, 49% were families where both partners were not in the labour force.

At least one partner was employed in 62% of couple families without dependants, and 43% had both partners employed. The husband was employed full time in 51% of couple families without dependants and the wife was employed full time in 31%. In these families, the proportion in which wives were employed part time has risen over the last five years, from 14% in June 1993 to 17% in June 1999, although it remained steady in the last year.



In June 1999, the proportion of these families where at least one partner was unemployed was 3.4%, compared with 6.5% for couple families with dependants present. As with couple families with dependants, the unemployment pattern for these families broadly reflects changes in the level of unemployment for the total population.

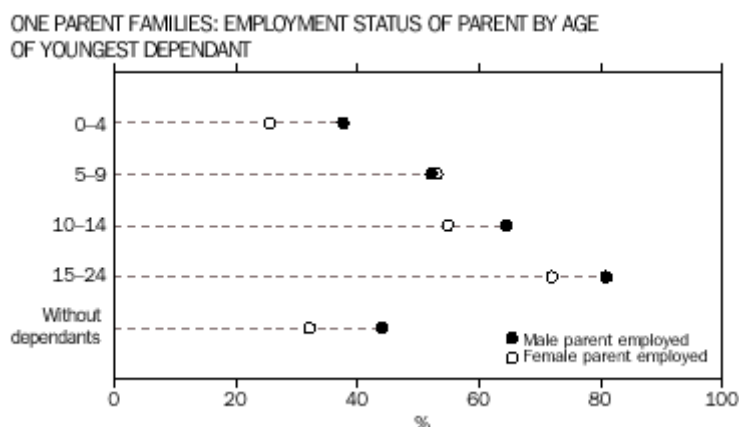
ONE PARENT FAMILIES

In June 1999, there were 772,400 one parent families, making up 15% of all families. This percentage has increased from 13% in June 1994.

The parent was not in the labour force in 48% of one parent families. This has decreased from 51% in June 1994. In June 1999, 55,400 (7.2%) were unemployed, of whom 16,500 or 30% had been unemployed for 52 weeks or more.

ONE PARENT FAMILIES WITH DEPENDANTS

The parent was employed in 49% of one parent families with dependants. Of those families with a male head, the parent was employed in 63% of cases, compared with 47% of those with a female parent. The proportion with the parent employed generally increased as the age of the youngest dependant increased, with 74% of one parent families whose youngest dependant was aged 15-24 years having an employed parent, compared to 26% whose youngest dependant was aged 0-4.



Of the 545,400 one parent families with dependants present, 485,600 or 89% had a female parent. Of these, 22% were employed full time and 25% employed part time. Of the 59,700 one

parent families with a male parent, the parent was employed full time in 53% of cases, with a further 11% employed part time.

The percentage of these families with the parent unemployed has decreased to 8.8% in June 1999. The proportion peaked at 9.5% in June 1993 before falling to 8.6% the following year, and remained relatively steadily for the next three years. It rose to 9.4% in June 1998 before falling again in 1999.

In June 1999, there were 453,200 children aged 0-14 in one parent families where that parent was not employed. This has fallen by 6% over the last year, however, the level remains nearly 30% higher than in June 1993.

PERSONS WHO WERE NOT MEMBERS OF A FAMILY

Persons living alone accounted for 11% (1,595,200) of the population where relationship in household was determined in June 1999. Approximately 55% were female, two thirds of whom were aged 55 and over. Of the females who lived alone, 32% were employed. Of the males, while 58% were employed, only 36% were aged 55 and over.

Of the 901,400 persons who were not members of a family and were not living alone (e.g. those in group houses) in June 1999, some 57% were male, of whom 65% were aged 20-34. The same proportion of females were also aged 20-34.

A large proportion (75%) of the persons who were not family members and were not living alone were employed, with the proportion slightly lower for females than for males. The majority of employed males (85%) and employed females (75%) were working full-time.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Information referred to in this article is contained in the ABS publication Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Families, Australia (Cat. no. 6224.0). More limited information about relationship in household and families is published every month in Labour Force, Australia (Cat. no. 6203.0). Copies can be obtained by contacting any of the ABS offices listed on the back cover of this publication. For further information on this topic, contact Michael Johnson on telephone (02) 6252 6525; email michael.johnson@abs.gov.au or contact any ABS office.

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